

NEW BATTALION "Stood Up"

By SGT Maurice Denton - Staff Journalist

In one of the most significant events in the history of the 100th Division (IT), a new battalion held an assumption command ceremony at Fort Knox recently to install Commander Lt. Col. Jayson Sawyer. The mission of the new Army Reserve unit, known as the 4th Battalion (ROTC), 399th Regiment, 8th Brigade (SROTC), is critical to the manpower needs of the U.S. Army.

"We are to assist in the training, education, development, recruiting and motivation of future military leaders of America's sons and daughters," according to Lt. Col. Sawyer.

Sawyer is a civilian contract employee for the United States Recruiting Command at Ft. Knox. He most recently served as a Small Group Leader for the 100th Division's Command and General Staff Officers Battalion in Nashville. The 100th Division has over 3,000 soldiers throughout Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky and Mississippi.

In his assumption of command speech, Lt. Col. Sawyer highlighted the history of the Reserve Officers Training Corps. "The signing of the National Defense Act of 1916 by President Woodrow Wilson resulted in the largest officer producing organization with the American military." The success of the ROTC program is reflected in the numbers: Army ROTC traditionally commissions some 60-70% of the second lieutenants who join the active Army, the Army National Guard and the U.S. Army Reserve.

According to a recent article in the *2001 Profile of the U.S. Army*, published by the Association of the United States Army, ROTC has become even more important. Besides ROTC, the Army trains officers from two other sources: the United States Military Academy at West Point, and the Officer Candidate School. The U. S. Army Cadet Command operates the ROTC program, with programs at 270 colleges and universities throughout the United States. In FY 2000, ROTC supplied 3,380 out of total of 4,941 commissioned officers.

Although the 8th Brigade headquarters section will probably stay in Louisville for the near future, the new battalion is now actively recruiting 156 enlisted and 22 officers to drill at Ft. Knox to meet mission demands. "The task is ominous, but doable with a lot of help: finding the soldiers and officers to recruit, motivate, lead and take care of senior ROTC trainees are among our biggest priorities," Sawyer says. "Projections that this cadre forming could result in a unit that one day eventually reach around 178 soldiers indicates the upfront challenges we face in recruiting good people for these slots", Sawyer added.

Working with the ROTC program is not necessarily new to the 100th Division. The Division's 7th Brigade has been actively involved since 1996 staffing the Holding Company. This group has been responsible for ground transportation, housing and other administrative functions for the nearly 3,000 ROTC students who arrive each summer at Ft. Knox for Camp Challenge.

In a recent interview with an ROTC publication Capt. Clifton Cribb remarked, "Some of our reservists have been in the Army for more than 20 years, some with Vietnam combat situations. Although there is an age gap, our soldiers are able to relate with the cadets, sharing actual experiences the cadets wouldn't get anywhere else." Many feel the success of the 7th Brigade's efforts comes from the credibility of the 100 member plus training staff, in the E-6 to E-7 range, most with four or more years of active duty under their belt.

The training responsibilities include common task testing, 9mm training, basic map reading and land navigation courses. According to preliminary plans, training courses from the 7th Brigade will be folded into the new 8th Brigade (SROTC) responsibilities.

The brigade's **"Our Mission-America's Future"** Capt. Steve Logan suggested slogan from 30 entries as "most reflective of the unit's purpose and future direction".

Those interested in getting in on the ground floor of this opportunity should contact Sgt. Maj. Neal Dickey, staff administrator at 502-454-2979 or 2980. The fax number for resumes is 502-454-2977 and the mailing address is 100th Division (IT), 8th Brigade, 3600 Century Division Way, Louisville, Ky. 40205.



Lt. Col. Jayson Sawyer accepts the Colors of his new Command

"We are to assist in the training, education, development, recruiting and motivation of future military leaders of America's sons and daughters," according to Lt. Col. Sawyer.